

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 00503 211325Z

ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

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AMEMBASSY OSLO

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USMISSION NATO

USEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 0503

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: THE POLITICAL CENTER: THE MATING DANCE PICKS UP SPEED

REF: MADRID 9692 0390 A-1

SUMARRY; THE MADRID BASED CENTER RIGHT AND PART OF THE CENTER
HAVE AGREED TO FORM AN ELECTORAL COALITIONM WHETHER THE REST
OF THE CENTER AND THE CENTER LEFT WILL JOIN NOW HINGES ON THE
DECISION OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "TEAM" PARTICULARLY ON
HOW THE REST OF THE TEAM HANDLES THE HERETOFORE STEADFAST VETO
OF CD LEADER GIL ROBLES OVER ANY ELECTORAL COOPERATION WITH
REGIME LINKED PARTIES. END SUMMARY.

1. THE PRESS OF THE IMPENDING ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN, SUBTLE

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PAGE 02 MADRID 00503 211325Z

PRESSURES FROM PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ PERCEIVED ELECTORAL LOGIC.
AND FEARS OF FRAG'S ALIANZA POPULAR HAVE ACCELERATED EFFORTS
BY CENTRIST GROUPS TO FORM A BROAD COALITION, LABEL
ED "CENTRO DEMOCRATICO", FOR BOTH THE UPPER AND LOWER HOUSE
CONTESTS. ALREADY THIS WEEK.

TWO SMALL LIBERAL PARTIS (GARRIGUES' FPD AND CAMUN
AS' PDP) AGREED WITH THE "PARTIDO POPULAR" (PP) OF ARE

ILZA CABANILLAS ORTEGA TO PRESENT A UNIFIED ELECTORAL SLATE. ENRIQUE LARROUQUE'S SMALL PARTIDO LIBERAL SOON FOLLOWED, LEAVING ONLY THE LIBERAL GROUPING OF JOAQUIN SATRUSTEGUI, WHO CRITICIZED THE AGREEMENT AS AN OPERATION MOUNTED BY THE GOVT, (REFERRING PARTLY TO THE MUCH PUBLICIZED MEETING OF GARRIGUES AND CAMUNAS WITH PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ THE MORNING OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT) OUTSIDE THE COALITION. NO GOVT MINISTERS ARE OVERLY ACTIVE IN THIS OPERATION, BUT OREJA (FOREIGN AFFAIRS), LAVILLA (JUSTICE), AND CALVO SOTELO (PUBLIC WORKS ARE IDENTIFIED WITH THE PP.

THE PP, IN TURN SIGNED A "FEDERATION" AGREEMENT WITH THE CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "UNION DEMOCRATICA ESPANOLA" (UDE) OF MONREAL LUQUE, WHICH IS LINKED TO GOVT MINISTERS OSORIO (PRESIDENCY), REGUERA (INFORMATION), DE LA MATA (SYNDICAL RELATIONS), AND CARRILES (TREASURY). WE NOTE THAT PP UDE TALKS APPARENTLY BEGAN TO MAKE SERIOUS PROGRESS ONLY AFTER THE LATTER'S FEDERATION DISCUSSION WITH CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "TEAM" LEADER RUIZ GIMENEZ BROKE OFF, WE ASSURE AS THE RESULT OF OPPOSITION FROM FOLLOW CD LEADER GIL ROBLES TO COOPERATION WITH UDE.

ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA'S "PARTIDO POPULAR DEMOCRATICO CRISTIANO" (PPDC) AS A MEMBER OF THE TEAM'S ELECTORAL COMMITTEE, THEN ANNOUNCED THAT IT WAS PUTTING A FOOT IN THE ABORNING "CENTRO DEMOCRATICO" ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA, ALWAYS AN ADVOCATE OF A BROAD CENTRIST COALITION, IS TRYING TO SERVE AS A BRIDGE AND NUNDE THE CD TEAM INTO THE "CENTRO DEMOCRATICO"

2. THE CLEAR PURPOSE OF THIS OPERATION IS TO CRAT A SNOW BALL EFFECT IN THE CENTER WHICH WILL BRING IN THE REMAINING MAJOR
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PAGE 03 MADRID 00503 211325Z

GROUPINGS, PRINCIPALLY CD TEAM MEMBERS "IZQUIERDA DEMOCRATICA" (ID OF RUIZ GIMENEZ) AND "FEDERACION POPULAR DEMOCRATICA (GIL ROBLES FPD) AND THE FEDERACION SOCIALDEMOCRATA (FSD) OF FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ/LASUEN. (AT WRITING, THE ALIANZA SOCIALSSTA DEMOCRATICA" OF GARCIA LOPEZ MURILLO, AND CANTARERO WILL NOT BE INVITED TO JOIN, AND PROBABLY WOULD NOT ACCEPT IF ASKED. VIEWED SCHEMATICALLY, THE CENTER RIGHT (THE PP AND UDE) HAS NOW COME TOGETHER WITH PART OF THE CENTER (SOME LIBERALS AND PPC) THE TASK REMAINING IS TO LINK UP WITH THE REMAINDER OF THE CENTER (THE CD TEAM) AND THE CENTER LEFT (FSD). FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ, RUIZ GIMENEZ, AND AREILZA JUST MET PRIVATELY TO DISCUSS SUCH AN ELECTORAL ALLIANCE, AND THE CD TEAMS' POLITICAL COMMITTEE WILL MEET ON MONDAY TO DEAL WITH THE SAME SUBJECT.

3. WHETHER THIS BROAD COALITION EVENTUATES DEPENDS PRIMARILY ON THE DECISION OF THE CD TEAM. (AS FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ TOLD EMBOFFS YESTERDAY, HE PERSONALLY SUPPORTS THE FORMATION OF THE COALITION BUT IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT

FOR FSD TO JOIN IF THE CD TEAM DOES NOT BEACUSE IM-
PLICITLY THE PARTICIPTION OF THE TEAM, AND RUIZ GIL-
MEMEN IN PARTICULAR, WOULD MITIGKATE THE CONSERVAIVE
IMAGES OF THE PP AND UDE.) THE TEAM'S DECISION IN TURN
HINGES ON WHAT HAS THUS FAR BEEN THE STEADFAST REFUSAL
OF GIL ROBLES TO TIE UP WITH REGIME LINKED GROUPINGS
LIKE UDE AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, PP (SEE REFTEL FOR
THE REASONING OF GIL ROBLES, WHO HAS SUPPORTED A RELATION
BROAD COALITION IN THE UPPER HOUSE ELECTION,
BUT AN EXCLUSIVE LABELED CD TEAM SLATE IN THE LOWER)

4. GIL ROBLES HAS GIVEN NO INIDCATION THAT HE WILL ALTER
HIS STANCE, BUT THE PRESSURES ON HIM WILL BE GREAT, BOTH
RFROM OUTSIDE THE TEAM AND FROM WITHIN, WERE RUIZ GIMENEZ
AND ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA HAVE BEEN PARTISANS OF COALITION
WITH THE PP AND UDE. THE POSITION OF THE TEAM'S
REGIONAL MEMBERS SUCH AS THE IMPORTANT BASQUE PNCV AND CATALAN
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PAGE 04 MADRID 00503 211325Z

UDC ON THIS QUESTION PROBABLY IS NOT CRITICAL. SINCE
THEYR REPORTEDLY WILL PRESENT THEIR OWN INDEPENDENT RE-
GIONAL SLATES, MAKING NO REFERENCE TO THE TEAM PER SE,
THIS PROBABLY MEANS THAT THE TWO MADRID BASED TEAM MEMBERS
IDAND FPD, ARE LARGELY FREE TO WORK OUT THEIR DECISION
ON ELECTORAL TACTICS IN THE REST OF SPAIN BETWEEN
THEM SELVES. IN ANY EVENT THIS DECISIONMAKING PROCESS
IS ACCELERATING RAPIDLY, AND THE BASIC ELECTORAL ALIGN
MENT OR ALIGNMENTS OF THE POLITICAL CENTER MAY WELL BE
VISIBLE IN FAIRLY SHORT ORDER. (WE WILL REPORT BY SEPTTEL
ON THE ONE REMAINING GOVT LINKED GROUPING THE
REGIME "SOCIAL DEMOCRATS" IDENTIFIED WITH INTERIOR MINISTER
MARTIN VILLA AND CENTERED AROUND THE CORTES "GRUPO
INDEPENINETE" WHICH COULD EVENTUALLY PLAY A ROLE IN
THE "CENTRO DEMOCRATICO)
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